



Maryland K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Overview and Requirements for Program Participation

February 11, 2021

Governor Larry Hogan and State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen Salmon are committed to supporting Maryland schools returning safely to in-class instruction statewide. The COVID-19 Testing Task Force, Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) have developed a **K-12 Testing Program** to provide free COVID-19 tests for school systems and non-public schools as an additional resource to support schools that are open, or plan to reopen, **in March 2021 and remain open for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.**

The state will provide both rapid antigen point-of-care (POC) tests and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) specimen collection supplies proportional to the number of students and staff returning for in-person learning, based on the anticipated number of students and staff that may need testing based on guidance from MDH. This is a voluntary program.

The program will provide schools with the necessary tools and information to implement both POC and PCR methods in schools with the goal of testing, at a minimum, symptomatic students and staff, as well as asymptomatic students and staff with confirmed COVID-19 exposure. This program can stand alone as a school's testing regimen, or can enhance an existing testing effort they have implemented.

Full program details will be shared with schools when their registration is completed.

Critical Time-Sensitive Program Requirements for Participating Schools

Schools must have the following requirements and procedures in place and relevant documentation on file prior to beginning this testing program. Schools awaiting final approval for program participation should review and take steps to ensure these critical measures are in place.

- **Hold an active CLIA certification and Maryland Laboratory License and keep on file in accordance with state and federal regulations.**
 - If you **DO** already hold both:
 - Fully complete a [Laboratory Licensing Change Form](#), and fax to the number listed on the form. Please be sure to indicate that you wish to conduct COVID-19 rapid antigen testing, and list the BinaxNow Covid-19 Ag Card.
 - Once you fax in the form, as long as your CLIA Certificate is not expired you can start testing immediately and the state will mail out an amended laboratory license with the relevant test category you have added.
 - Questions can be directed to paul.celli@maryland.gov.
 - If you **DO NOT** already hold both a CLIA certificate and Maryland Laboratory License on file:
 - Fully complete a [State Compliance Application](#) for a Maryland Laboratory License and a federal [CLIA Certification Application](#) (\$180 fee every two years) and indicate the BinaxNow Covid-19 Ag Card for COVID-19 rapid testing.
 - Application instructions:
 - Both applications are to be filled out and signed by the chosen Lab Director and emailed to paul.celli@maryland.gov (For CLIA waived testing, the director at minimum must have a BS degree in a physical science, Biology, Nursing, etc.).
 - Upon application approval, there is a roughly 2-day processing period after which the lab will be invoiced \$180 by CMS for a CLIA waiver. There are no longer fees for state licensure or renewal; the state license is non-expiring.
 - Once the invoice is paid, the lab will receive a state license and a CLIA certificate of waiver.
- **Have licensed healthcare professional(s) on site to collect and process the test samples.**
 - This includes any individual licensed, registered, or certified by MDH or a Maryland health occupations board who has appropriate training and supervision.

- **Have access to Maryland’s Health Information Exchange (CRISP) and appropriate personnel to report the point-of-care results into CRISP.**
 - [Information on reporting COVID-19 test results](#) and [Training video](#).
- **Ensure proper consent or authorization is obtained from students and staff including:**
 - Consent for a minor to be tested, and
 - Release of information.
 - An example FERPA consent form can be found [here](#).
- **Complete testing training, as needed.** Training by Abbott on their BinaxNOW POC test is required as part of the EUA. Further training info will be provided, including a schedule for online Abbott BinaxNOW sessions.

Testing Supply Distribution

School systems and non-public schools who opt-in to this voluntary program will receive both rapid antigen POC tests and PCR specimen collection supplies for students and staff in schools.

- An initial distribution of tests is targeted to arrive in participating schools by March 1, for registrations completed by Wednesday, February 17, 2021. Registrations can be submitted through Friday, February 26 to receive tests with the next scheduled distribution.
- The state plans to distribute supplies two to three times March through June.
- A process will be available to request additional supplies, if needed before a scheduled distribution.

Technical Assistance: Schools will be encouraged to continue to seek Technical Assistance from their local health department or existing contacts within MDH. The Testing Task Force and the MDH Office of Population Health Improvement (OPHI) will continue to host the “Community of Learning” that we established late last year to provide a forum for schools to discuss testing with MDH and each other.

Email us with questions: MDH.K12Testing@Maryland.gov